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Montana and the Sky



Department of Transportation – Aeronautics Division

Vol. 45 No. 9

September 1994

Sen. Burns Joins Schafer Meadows Work Session



Senator Conrad Burns and members of his staff participated in the annual Schafer Meadows Work Session which is co-sponsored by the Montana Pilots Association, the Montana Aeronautics Division, and the U.S. Forest Service. Senator Burns serves Loren Smith, Great Falls MPA Hangar, Saturday evenings feast which was provided courtesy of Loren. (See article on page 2 and photos on page 5).



Bob Lipscomb, President, Montana Pilots Association (MPA), presents Senator Burns with a Certificate of Appreciation during the MPA board/business meeting held in conjunction with the Schafer Meadows Work Session each year. Bob thanked the Senator for his efforts on behalf of Montana pilots. The Senator continues to display a significant interest in general aviation and other issues including airspace, Flight Service Station closures, weather reporting, FAA enforcement procedures, and others.

Transportation Group Meets

The National Commission on Intermodal Transportation met in Butte August 24 at the urging of Senator Max Baucus. The commission received much publicity after it cancelled the event earlier in the month because two of its members didn't want to fly on smaller aircraft that serve the Bert Mooney Airport in Butte.

The commission was created in 1991 to study transportation issues in the United States and try to find better ways of moving people and goods from place to place.

Baucus, who is chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, asked the commission to meet in Butte so it could learn about rural transportation issues. Baucus' committee funds the commission. The need for the commission to meet in places other than Los Angeles, New York or Boston was extremely important to Montana, according to Senator Baucus.

John Rabenberg, Chairman of the Governor's Essential Air Service Task Force, attended the hearing and testified before the Commission. John's comments focused on the importance of essential air service to eastern Montana.

The Montana Department of Transportation in its testimony also urged the Commission to advocate full funding for essential air service at no less than its present level.

The Commission's report is due to Congress at the end of September.

Administrator's Column

President Signs Product Liability Bill:

After ironing out differences between the Senate and House versions of the General Aviation Revitalization Act, President Clinton signed the S.1458 bill into law. The main provisions in the bill include an 18 year statute of repose for general aviation aircraft and component manufacturers which will prohibit law suits against those which are over 18 years from time of production or installation of a component part; is limited to aircraft under 20 passenger seating capacity which are not engaged in scheduled passenger-carrying operations; exempts suits for persons injured on the ground from the 18 year limitation; and exempts medical evacuation aircraft from the 18 year limitation. It has taken eight years to get a product liability bill passed and this bill will effect about 180,000 (60%) of the aircraft which will grow percentage wise quickly in a few years because of the fleet age and low production levels during the past decade. Although it is generally recognized that product liability is not the "fix all" to the general aviation downslide it is predicted to be a big lift to revitalize the industry. President Clinton stated, "...this is a job-creating and job-restoring measure that will bring good jobs and economic growth back to this industry. It will also help U.S. companies restore our Nation to the status of the premier supplier of general aviation aircraft to the world, favorably affecting our balance of trade..."

Schafer Meadows Work Session A Success: The Schafer Meadows annual volunteer work session was again a big success. The weather was beautiful and there was a large turnout to help with the work program which included painting signs & tables; cutting poles for the fence; setting new fence posts; cutting trees and clearing brush in approach areas of the runway; resetting fire place grills; rock picking; windsock changing; and assembling a new handicap outdoor toilet. Loren Smith, Great Falls MPA Hangar built a beautiful log toilet and it was disassembled and flown in in pieces to Schafer Meadows where a crew reassembled, sanded, bleached and painted it with a clear wood protector. This task took a considerable amount of time and it was nec-

essary for volunteers to return the following week to complete the project. The Alberta Aviation Council had two representatives present to see first hand how a volunteer program can be successful. They also pitched in and helped out with the work. The Canadian Government which owns and operates most Canadian airports is getting out of the airport business and turning airports over to the local governments. There are many of these which serve remote areas and due to lack of funding are in jeopardy of shutting down unless some type of volunteer program similar to ours in Montana can be established. Senator Conrad Burns and his staff, as well as Leo Giacometto, Director of Montana's Department of Agriculture, were again on hand this year and helped not only with the work but with preparing the big Saturday evening beef and turkey feed for the volunteers and U.S. Forest Service people who also helped with the work session.

On behalf of the Aeronautics Board and Division, I would like to extend our appreciation to everyone who took their personal time to pitch in and help us with this very important program.

IRS & EPA Change Fuel Dye: Responding to concerns of the aviation industry and the Federal Aviation Agency both the EPA and the IRS have decided to change their requirements for dyeing off road tax exempt diesel fuel BLUE and instead they now require that this diesel fuel be dyed RED. The concern, of course, was over the possibility of mistaking diesel fuel for 100/130 and 100 low lead AVGAS. The EPA & IRS change satisfies these fuels, but what about the 80 octane fuel which is dyed RED? Although there are fewer and fewer 80 octane suppliers we still have RED 80 octane fuel suppliers so we must exercise caution to be sure we are not getting RED diesel fuel. We have all read about a recent fuel mixup which is costing an oil company millions of dollars to replace piston engines. We also need to exercise caution for the BLUE 100/130 and 100 low lead AVGAS because there is lots of diesel on the market which is dyed BLUE and the new IRS & EPA mandate does not take effect until October 1, 1994.



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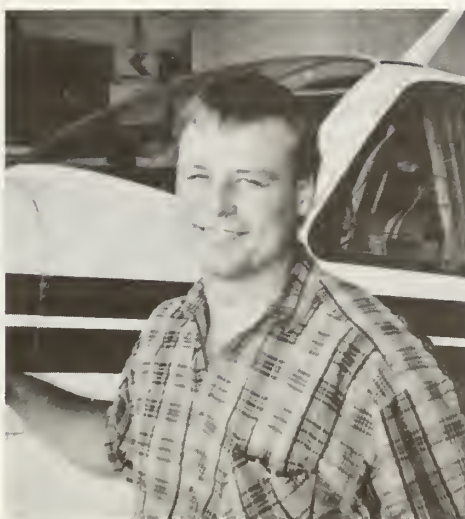
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Greetings and Salutations!

Let me introduce myself, I'm James Greil, your new Aviation Support Officer. I started the job August 1, replacing Redge Meierhenry, who is now the Airport/Airways Bureau Chief.

I was born and raised in Missoula, where my mother and father, (Richard and Elva Greil), owned and operated a road construction business for many years. I received a degree in Aeronautical Science/Engineering Technologies with a minor in Aviation Safety from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, AZ.

Having worked in the family firm and flight instructing for a number of years, (not to mention propping on the rugby field a time or two), I will do my best to bring to the Division and you, (the backbone of Montana aviation), a solid source of information and help in the years to come.



I look forward to meeting and working with many of you in my new position and hope to provide the same kind of quality service that you have come to know from Redge and the staff here in fulfilling any aviation needs you may have throughout the great state of Montana.

EAA Announces Flight Advisor Program

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) has announced a major new member program designed to help pilots safely transition into unfamiliar aircraft, as well as conduct first flights on just-restored or constructed airplanes.

The EAA Flight Advisor Program is based on a volunteer corps of EAA members who have flight experience in specific types of aircraft and are willing to share that knowledge with others as Flight Advisors.

The Flight Advisor's primary role will be to work with pilots and builders who are about to fly a new aircraft for the first time. Advisors will specialize in specific types of aircraft, such as homebuilts, ultralights, vintage airplanes and contemporaries.

The Flight Advisor is not a test pilot or instructor, and will not do any actual flying. The Advisor will help the pilot/builder determine if that person's skills are adequate to safely fly the airplane.

"EAA is looking for experienced pilots who want to become Flight Advisors," said EAA President Tom Poberezny. We need pilots who can pass their experience on to

others. Our greatest resource is the flying experience of fellow EAA members. By utilizing that experience, this program can have a major impact on improved safety in the aviation community."

Poberezny also recognized AVEMCO Insurance, one of the nation's leading aviation insurers, for their contributions to the development of the Flight Advisor program. AVEMCO has provided special insurance plans and premium incentives for builders and pilots who utilize Flight Advisors and EAA Technical Counselors, who assist builders and restorers in construction techniques and oversight.

For more information on the EAA Flight Advisors program call (414) 426-4800 or (800) 843-3612.

DARN!

We've received several comments regarding the mistaken identity of the Royal Canadian Air Force C-45 that was identified in last month's issue of *Montana and the Sky* as a DC-3. We stand corrected!

Calendar

September 3-5 ■ Yellowstone Family Fly-in, West Yellowstone.

September 15-18 ■ Reno Air Races.

September 16-18 ■ Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell.

September 23-25 ■ Montana Pilot's Association Fall Fly-in, Glendive.

September 29-October 1 ■ British Columbia Aviation Council Conference, Kelowna.

September 30-October 1 ■ Open House, Aerotronics, Billings.

September 30-October 1 ■ Big Sky Wing, OX5 Aviation Pioneers, Stardust Motor Lodge, Idaho Falls.

October 1-2 ■ Rocky Mountain Air Fare, Denver.

October 6-8 ■ Alberta Aviation Council General Meeting, Jasper.

February 3-5, 1995 ■ Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, Helena.

March 1-4, 1995 ■ Montana Aviation Conference, Kalispell.

Airspace Change

The Federal Aviation Administration has issued its final rule in establishment of the Billings Logan International Airport Airspace Area.

The action establishes a Class C airspace area and revokes the Class D airspace area at the Billings Logan International Airport, Billings, MT. The Billings Logan International Airport is a public-use facility at which a Terminal Radar Service Area (TRSA) is currently in effect. The establishment of this Class C airspace area will require pilots to establish two-way radio communications with the air traffic control (ATC) facility providing air traffic services prior to entering the airspace and thereafter maintain those communications while within the Class C airspace area. This action supports a goal of airspace reclassification—to simplify the airspace by eliminating overlapping airspace designations.

15 Meter Nationals

By William Ard
Bozeman, MT

I told them it couldn't be done, but I was wrong. The 1994 Fifteen Meter National Championship was actually held deep in the American Outback this July and come off without a single significant problem—a pretty remarkable feat in a part of the country where there are fewer than 20(???) SSA members in the entire state and the population at large views soaring as something that happens in a nylon contraption with your feet hanging out the bottom. The men and women who tackled the job combined meticulous planning with carefully selected hired guns and—hey, we had a good contest!

To assure a quality contest, it was decided to run a two tier operation: Eric Finke was the pre-contest manager in charge of the first nine months of hard labor, with Mike Kreikemeier and Mike Edens sharing 2nd in command, Debbie Alke of the Aeronautics Division as secretary/registrar and Dave Smith as Creator of the Budget and Keeper of the Checkbook. They worked long hours with the help and oversight of Sterling Starr and Greg Mecklenburg, the only two Montana competitors and Montana pilots with Nationals experience. For the contest itself, control was handed over to Steve Maier as on-site manager, Charlie Spratt as CD, and Edre Maier as Grid Boss with the local minions trying to do as many jobs as possible in the hours available. Bryan Hoke, Rene Watson and Matt Bowman ran the gate, Jim Bobo did the scoring in lightning fast style.

Weather was a challenge, but everyone knows by now that putting on a contest guarantees an atypical jet stream and some inexplicable frontal situations. This year was no exception: the monsoons of '93 gave way to emergency drought conditions in 22 counties statewide, and forest fires so numerous there was no one left to fight most of them. By late July the air was unstable enough to provide adequate to good conditions for the contest, but almost every day the development came late and blew out early, confounding our rosy predictions of non launches and soaring until 8 p.m. Charlie and the task committee did their damndest to send the guys in interesting directions every day and actually made most of the pilots happy most of the time; you can't beat that.

Final scores ranked the top five as follows: Ray Gimmey, Sacramento, CA; Gary Ittner, Los Angeles, CA; Sean Franke, Hemet, CA; Chip Garner, Leucadia, CA; and Peter Masak, Missouri City, TX.

As the winner, Ray advances as a member of the U.S. Soaring Team competing in the International Soaring Championships in New Zealand in 1995.

The tow pilots who came from all over the west were Taber Kopan, Paul Morlang, Springer Jones, Scratch Lee and Blanton Owens. They were joined by local pilots Jeff Brazeal and Doug Chapman in bor-



rowed ships and the whole bunch did a magnificent job. And they never laid a hand on a single glider pilot, either.

There was a lot of talk in the first few days about the wingnut basket case who chose this forbidding and inconsistent place as the site for a national competition and what fun it would be to get back to the desert. One wonders how big and consistent the desert is going to be in New Zealand or, for that matter, anyplace else in the world, but in the American Southwest. This contest provided eight days of "in your face" flying, even with fairly lousy weather for this time of year—and the whole contest was directed to the north and east, leaving some of Montana's best soaring untouched by this year's pilots.

Finally, there was universal acclaim for the job done by the contest crew. With practically no help at all, seven or eight people organized what was only the second contest ever held in this part of the country and, with a dedicated group of volunteers, made it all work smoothly. The "pros" who came all the way out here to run things, quickly adapted to the fact that the locals figured they knew what they were doing, and the two groups meshed with a minimum of eyeball to eyeball confrontation. It seemed like having "competition" people deal with competition issues while the locals handled the organizational details was a good idea.

In short: it worked. We hope you can make it out to fly with us and see what all the fuss was about!

NOTE: Due to space constraints, Bill's entire story was not able to appear, but will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Soaring Magazine*—be sure to check it out for the rest of the story!



Gate workers intently watch for gliders overhead preparing to begin the day's task.

Prepared by:
IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS
July 1994

The Idaho Division of Aeronautics is preparing a plan for medium and long term maintenance and improvement of its recreational airports and facilities. We recognize that all aviators, both resident and non-resident alike, play a vital role in determining our current as well as future needs. So that we may better meet the needs and demands of the flying public, we would appreciate a few minutes of your time in providing valuable input towards our planning effort.

1. Which Idaho recreational airports do you frequent the most? (if two or more appear to be of equal importance, please attempt to prioritize according to your individual preference)

a.
b.
c.
d.

2. For what purpose do you use recreational airports?

a. camping	d. fishing	f. hunting
b. picnicing	e. sightseeing	g. other (please specify)
c. hunting		

3. How many times per year would you estimate that you use those airports identified in #1 above?

Airport	# Visits
---------	----------

a.
b.
c.
d.

4. Which facilities currently existing at the airports you use need the most improvement, i.e. fire pits, camp grounds, picnic tables, tie downs, etc.? Please specify the airport(s).

5. What facilities would you like to see installed at the airports you use which are not currently there?

6. Do you find donation boxes, sign in registers, airport identification signs etc. to be of value?

7. Do you see the need for additional state-owned and maintained recreational/emergency airports?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, what area would you like to see them located in?

8. Are you interested in volunteering for work parties to make improvements to those airports you are most interested in?
9. If you are a commercial operator, what are your primary uses for recreational airports, i.e. hunters, mail delivery, etc?
10. Have you had an opportunity to use the courtesy car assigned to either Johnson Creek, Smiley Creek, or Cavanaugh Bay? If so, did you find them to be useful and of value to Idaho's recreational airport program?
11. Personal information:
 - a. Home state
 - b. Number of years flying experience
 - c. How long have you been visiting Idaho by aircraft?
 - d. FAA certificate level
 - e. Type of aircraft

12. Additional Comments:

|||||

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|| | ||

More Soaring



Charlie Spratt, Contest Director, Steve Maier, On-Site Contest Manager and Greg Mecklenburg, organizational committee member and contestant, brief pilots at the kick-off pilot meeting. The Montana Aeronautics Division provided a PanAm Weatherstation System throughout the contest to assist with daily weather forecasts. Eric Finke, Pre-Contest Manager and Steve Maier take a breather following launch of Contest Day 1.

Schafer Meadows Work Session



The major project this year at Schafer Meadows was constructing a handicap accessible outhouse, built by Loren Smith, Great Falls. "Many hands make light work" proved somewhat true as several volunteers worked throughout the three days on this venture. A crew returned the following week to complete the outhouse. At left, Leo Giacometto, Director, Department of Agriculture, pitches in to assist pilot volunteers Dave Gates and Roy Hollandsworth.



Airport Pavement Management System

Forty-six airports in Montana will be surveyed as part of the 1994 Montana Aviation System Plan Update. This inspection will be analyzing each airports pavement condition.

The objective of this effort is to create an engineering basis for making systematic and objective decisions regarding pavement conditions and the measurement of the rate of deterioration. This information becomes a valuable management tool for the Sponsor, the FAA and the Aeronautics Division to anticipate the scheduling of maintenance activities and rehabilitation efforts.

Your airport manager will be contacted shortly to schedule the pavement inspection. Work generally will be accomplished in half a day at most general aviation airports and will not result in the closure of the airport.

The on site airport visit will use a stan-

dardized methodology to inspect the taxiways, runways, and aprons of your airport. The visual assessment will define pavement distress types such as raveling, transverse cracks, etc., as well as the severity of the each distress type. This information leads to calculated pavement condition index value, or PCI value which ranges from 0 to 100. The higher the calculated PCI value, the better the condition of the pavement. For instance, a final calculated value of 71 for a segment of pavement would represent "very good" condition.

A powerful feature of this kind of analysis, is to be able to make predictions of your airports pavement future performance. Most of the airport pavements in this round of inspections have been

"looked at" previously in 1991 and in 1988. By establishing these data points in your airports pavement condition history, an accurate prediction can be made to the anticipated future rate of deterioration. Our representatives conducting these pavement surveys will be sharing the results of this work with your airport manager to help establish pavement maintenance scheduling.

Interestingly, the Airport Improvement Program reauthorization passed in Congress recently, requires that before any AIP funds are spent on pavement reconstruction or rehabilitation, the Sponsor must have in place an on-going Pavement Management Program. Your airport participation in the Pavement Condition Index program should satisfy this requirement. It appears that Congress recognizes the value of this work.

Notes from one journal...

A student from the year before bursts into my room, half out of breath, just as I'm closing up for the day. "Hey, I've got the glider scheduled, you wanta go?" In 1993 Craig Eff was top student in my aviation class. He won a soaring scholarship, and passed his check-ride a week ago. In thirty-five minutes I'm in the bubble nose of a Czechoslovakian-built Blanik L-3 sailplane being towed aloft. At 3,000 feet above ground level Craig releases the tow with a 'Pang!' and the rush of wind dies to a whisper. "You take it," he calls from the back seat, and I have the stick of a motorless airplane for the first time. We make lazy, peaceful turns searching for lift, but there is none. Still, with a 30:1 glide ratio we remain aloft easily, circling, looking, friends of the wind. Soaring is for people who would rather understand than conquer. The young man behind me is pilot in command—teacher and student have traded places. I began flying before he was born; it is part of my past. Craig began flying last year; it is part of his future. Eventually Craig takes over for the landing. Today I know that at some unmarked time I delivered a virtuoso

performance to an audience of one, and this is my delayed applause.

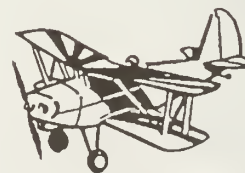
It's moments like these, and the ongoing encouragement of my colleagues, that keep me in this business. Thanks again for your gracious support.

Jerome R. Hok
Aviation Instructor
Flathead High School



Craig Eff: Glacier Eagles Soaring Club Scholarship, 1993; Private Pilot, 1994; —(??), 1995.

Update: Jerry gave the following report on Jackson Leddy, one of his students who was a recipient of a 1994 Montana Aeronautics Division flight training scholarship. Jackson Leddy, featured in the July bulletin, is now checked out for solo flight in a Cessna 206, has logged nearly ninety hours, and has cross-country experience from Kalispell to Las Vegas, Nevada. Why, you may ask, is he still a student pilot? I'll tell you: He won't be old enough to qualify for a private pilot certificate until December. Someone must be doing *something* right.



Hands Across the Border

Name the world's international airports and de Gaulle, O'Hare, Narita, Pearson come to mind...but who ever heard of Ross International?

But Ross International at Coutts, Alberta -Sweetgrass, Montana, is the most "international" of all. Situated on the Alberta-Montana border, the grass airstrip is shared by Canada and the United States. It is so precisely on the border that the standard two-metre high boundary marker had to be dismantled as a danger to flying.

Ross International is a useful customs stop staffed by the two countries. Pilots are able to clear both customs while parked on the 120-metre wide boundary strip.

The Montana Aeronautics Division administers Ross International, with the flight service station at Lethbridge, 65 km to the west, providing advice to pilots.

Two other such "international" airstrips can be found on a map of Western Canada, at Del Bonita-Alberta and East Poplar-Saskatchewan.



Mike Ferguson, Administrator of the Aeronautics Division meets with Harry Skromeda, Canadian Department of Transport on Ross International airstrip at Sweetgrass, Montana/Coutts, Alberta. The Aeronautics Division operates three U.S./Canada border crossing airstrips located at Del Bonita, Sweetgrass, and East Poplar.

Aerotronics Open House

Aerotronics, Inc. in Billings, will be hosting their 3rd Annual Open House on September 30 and October 1.

Martin, Steve and the Aerotronics employees are welcoming all aviators to come

in for a visit and to handle the newest avionics available. Also, join us for a free barbecue, drawings, and refreshments and visit with Factory representatives.

Aviators will receive hands-on demon-

strations of the famous BOSE headsets, all of the current GPS handheld units, panel mounted units and combination GPS/COM radios. Additionally, current avionics and pilot accessories will be on display.

Martin and Steve have enlisted the company representatives from II Morrow, Garmin, King, Eventide, Trimble and pilot accessory manufacturers to help personally demonstrate their products and to answer questions on the use of their avionics.

Friday, from 1200 to 1900, the Factory Representatives will be available to personally work with customers who have questions on their currently installed avionics.

Saturday, beginning at 1000, the doors will open with free refreshments and drawings for door prizes. At 1304, Martin, our famous chef, will begin serving virtually the best "Montana Beef" in Montana. Drawings for door prizes will be held throughout the day!!

If you have any questions about the Open House, please call (406)259-5006.

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New phone number _____

First Airports Cleared for Satellite Approaches

Several thousand airports throughout the country will soon have their own piece of satellite technology giving them the capability to handle landings in bad weather, courtesy of the FAA.

Widespread use of a Department of Defense-developed satellite navigation system is beginning with FAA's authorization of aircraft approach guidance to three public use airports based on information from the Global Positioning System (GPS).

Frederick, MD, Oshkosh, WI, and Denton, TX will be the first to receive GPS-specific approaches, meaning that the airports will not need expensive conventional ground-based navigation aids for aircraft to fly an approach.

FAA Administrator David R. Hinson, joined by AOPA President Phil Boyer, was the first to fly one of the newly-authorized GPS approaches at Frederick Municipal Airport, and was pronounced a complete success.

In June 1993, the FAA authorized the use of approximately 2,500 "overlay" approaches, procedures that use ground-based navigation aid procedures as a framework.

By contract, stand-alone procedures are designed specifically for GPS and require no ground-based navigation aids. Of the more than 5,000 public use airports in the United States, fewer than half are currently served by any type of ground-based instrument approach. Conventional ground-based navigation aids can be very costly and require frequent maintenance. With GPS, an aircraft has a receiver in the cockpit to pick up radio signals from the GPS satellites, and the airport does not need any hardware on the ground. The specific approach information is available in a data base that is contained within the airborne GPS receiver.

GPS approaches may eventually replace all ground-based instrument approaches. The FAA plans to publish about 500 to 1,000 stand-alone procedures per year,

making all-weather air service possible at thousands of airports that are currently limited to good weather operations.

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